

Virginia Board of Dentistry

Administration of Topical Oral Fluorides by Dental Hygienists in the Virginia Department of Health

- Chapter 702 of the 2007 Acts of the Assembly authorizes a dental hygienist to *administer topical oral fluorides under an oral or written order or a standing protocol issued by a dentist or a doctor of medicine or osteopathic medicine* in accordance with provisions of the Drug Control Act. (§ [54.1-2722](#))
- The Drug Control Act provides that: *A nurse or a dental hygienist may possess and administer topical fluoride varnish to the teeth of children aged six months to three years pursuant to an oral or written order or a standing protocol issued by a doctor of medicine or osteopathic medicine that conforms to standards adopted by the Virginia Department of Health.* (§ [54.1-3408](#))
- Regulations of the Board of Dentistry require practice by a dental hygienist under direction, which means the dentist is present in the facility and examines the patient during the time services are being provided; or under general supervision if certain requirements are met, including a specific order by a dentist written within a specific time period before treatment by the hygienist is rendered.
- Only under the narrow provisions of § [54.1-2722](#) and § [54.1-3408](#) is a dental hygienist authorized to administer topical oral fluorides under a standing protocol developed by the Department of Health and signed by a dentist or physician. Such administration is limited to children aged six months to three years who receive home visits from the Health Department or who are enrolled in Head Start programs or who are clients of safety-net healthcare facilities (e.g. rural health, community health centers, mobile dental clinics, and Health Department programs).